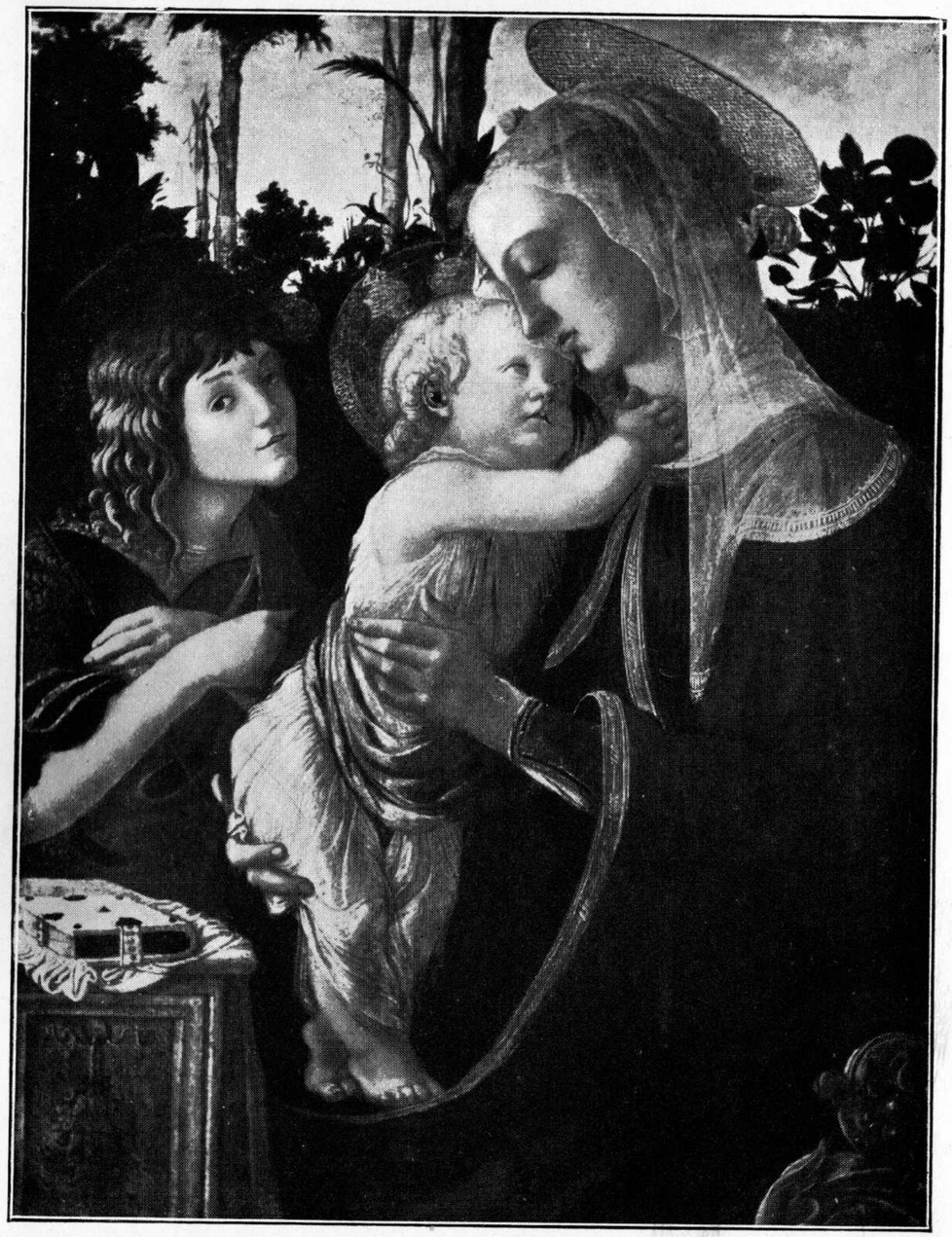

THE MADONNA AND CHILD AND ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

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A Tribute to Eire and Her Knights.

EIRE, peerless Eiré! wooed by west wind's gentlest breeze—
Too long thy heart-strings have been tuned to mournful minor keys!
Lift up thy winsome, radiant face suffused with Hope's soft glow,
For gallant Knights have sworn an oath to vanquish thy proud Foe.

though courageous to a fault, he lacked the personality that makes men face certain death at the word of command. He was not born to occupy a prominent place or to take a leading part, but to fulfil to perfection the part allotted to him—that of chief-of-staff to his brother. Long and hard study had made him thoroughly acquainted with military science, and his artistic skill made him invaluable in drawing up plans and diagrams. Also long and intimate intercourse with his brother had given him the power of understanding the slightest hint from him; their minds ran on the same lines, and as Willie could never be jealous of the other they worked admirably together.

He took a great interest in the games and other amusements of the boys, and once when they were losing interest in hurling and the standard of play was getting low, he got the influential boys together and asked them to help him to revive the game. He even took it up himself and turned out every half-holiday punctually. He never became a good hurler, but he learnt a lot, and was an opponent not to be despised. He played a little football, but only a little, as he had no liking for it, and it was quite firmly established. He had taken up handball soon after he came to the school, became a good player, and was very fond of it. In the latter game he organized many tournaments for which he supplied the prizes out of his own purse. In fact, in later years he did more for the games than anyone in the school.

He taught Drawing and English, and was an excellent teacher of both. He was a fine Shakespearian scholar and a good actor as well, so that his knowledge and interpretation of the characters in the plays was magnificent. At Christmas whatever class had one of Shakespeare's plays in its course used to act a scene from it for the rest of the boys at the "sing-song" we were accustomed to have before we went home. He was very painstaking in coaching us in these, and seemed quite enthusiastic about them. Every one of these was a success. This was a splendid idea of his, and we learnt more about the play from acting a small part of it than we could possibly learn any other way.

He was troubled with a slight lisp at times, but in spite of this he acted a good deal, and was very fond of it. He always took the leading rôle in his brother's plays, and was very good in these somewhat peculiar parts. He was indefatigable in helping to rehearse the plays, in preparing costumes, and making all arrangements. Through his efforts the whole performance always went off without a hitch.

He was deeply interested in all branches of art, but drama and sculpture were his favourites. He knew Benson, the Shakespearian actor, well, and greatly admired him. He was asked to join his company but declined, a thing which, I think, he somewhat regretted. He attended as many Shakespearian representations as he could, and in fact all good plays. Beyond the fact that he was fond of opera and went to operatic performances as often as opportunity offered,

I know very little about his musical tastes, as I know nothing about music myself, and we seldom spoke of it. He did a little painting, but always maintained that this was inferior to sculpture. "Anyone," he said, "who carves becomes so fascinated with it that he would regard painting as a waste of time." He maintained that the best thing he ever did was the statue of the Madonna in Westland Row Church, but thought he could have improved it had he given it more time. To our general regret he smashed up a bust of his brother he was engaged on, though, to the uninitiated eye at least, it was very good.

He had exquisite tact in dealing with the boys, with whom he was a great favourite. He won their esteem by taking their reasonings and ideas seriously and trying to convince them when they were wrong, but treating them as equals in an argument. When he had thus shown them that an idea was wrong and perhaps ridiculous they were disarmed by the tactful manner of his doing it. It was the same with our essays. Everyone knows how hard it is at first to set our inner selves down on paper. But we soon lost all fear of him and wrote quite freely.

He had a tolerably keen insight into the characters of the boys except that he was inclined to see only their good points. In fact, the small-mindedness of the world escaped him. A noble mind cannot understand a knave. This fact lent to our feeling for him a kind of protective interest. We fancied that we understood the seamy side of life much better than he. Possibly we did. He often discussed with me the boys, and the rules and management of the school, and I used to jest with him about this confidence. Like his brother he believed that the boys should manage their own affairs as much as possible. Also, he greatly believed in the instincts of children, and maintained that boys were much nobler and more honourable than men: that they were often right when men were wrong. He often remarked that his brother was never deceived in trusting to their honour. Indeed, while I was there only in two or three trivial cases was a lie ever told to either of them.

In the last two years of his life he took a keen interest in all military matters, and used to study the plans of various battles, especially in Irish history or where irregular troops were engaged. He could explain these with wonderful clearness. I remember going over the plan of the siege of Dublin in the seventeenth century with him. He pointed out the mistakes made and how they could have been avoided or rectified and the siege successful. He always maintained that the men would be all right in the revolution, if it ever came off, and that any mistakes that might occur would be due to the officers.

The last time I saw him in my life was from the window of one of the rooms in Richmond Barracks on the Tuesday morn-

being photographed by a British officer. It was when he and his comrades were being marched back from their courts-martial. Never in his life did he look so noble and dignified. He had his head turned slightly away exhibiting his profile to the camera. There was a calm, determined expression on his face. As he stood there with his arms folded on his chest, absolutely indifferent to what was going on, I at last fully appreciated his greatness. Then they were marched away.

As I think of his death it seems to me that perhaps I ought not to regret it so deeply. After all, what need had his soul to prolong its stay on this earth. The world had nothing to teach him, and he was not a teacher of men. It is only the few who were intimate with him that he would influence, and it were selfish to wish to detain him here for that. Those few will miss him terribly, but they have his memory. His brother was a teacher and the consummation of his life was the consummation of his teaching; who would have it otherwise? But Willie was different; he moved always in the quiet, shaded paths of life, gentle and thoughtful for others. Not for him was the glare and bustle of the broad highway.

He had a healthy regard for his life. He did not, like most men, morbidly covet it. I do not think he minded dying, he had witnessed the failure of his hopes, and to a man of his nobility of character life was a mere nothing to forfeit.

DAVID SEARS.

A Soldier's Song.

I walk with memory Dublin streets
  Where but awhile ago
I watched the troops of Eire pass
  So proudly to and fro,
And yearn once more to see the sheen
Of glinting steel and coats of green.

And round about the war-scarred town
  Wherein they fought and fell
Each gaunt and gaping ruin stands
  Their daring tale to tell,
And in my heart doth echo long
Their rousing, haunting battle song.

I hear again their buoyant step,
  I see them filing by;
See too the garb they wore as they
  Went forth to win or die.
So merry, manly, brave, and strong,
Still carolling their Soldier's Song.

MAEVE CAVANAGH.

Sheila's Wedding Day.

By LOUISE M. STACPOOLE KENNY.

AUTHOR OF *Carrow of Carrowduff*, *At the Court of Il Moro*, *Jacquetta*, *Love is Life*, *The Knight of the Green Shield*, etc.

"SHEILA! Sheila!" cried Mrs. Mulvaney.

"Comin', mamma," replied a soft voice, and a tall, slight girl dashed into the kitchen from the inner room, hurriedly fastening her bodice.

"I was changin' my Sunday frock," she explained, "it's time I was milkin' the cows."

"Arrah, agra, don't be troublin' yerself over the poor beasts; sure, Pat will milk them for ye this day, for, me dear child, I have good news for ye. Sheila, me darlin', ye are to be married to-morrow."

"Good news, dear Lord," gasped the girl, as, white and trembling, she sank on to a wooden settle; "sure it's jokin' ye are, mamma?"

"Sorra a joke, Sheila asthore, but Gospel truth, so you need not have put off your best clothes, for ye can take it aisy to-night, and rest yerself so you be fair and fresh to-morrow; comb your hair and get your finery ready to wear when you stand before the priest."

"Oh, I can't, mamma, I just can't get married like that, so sudden-like, and Shrove-tide past and gone. I thought there would be no talk of marrying me this year anyway."

"Is not Low Monday as good a day for a wedding as Shrove Tuesday, my girl. It's all settled; your father is givin' two hundred pounds for your fortune. And ye'll have a nice tidy bit of a house and a good farm, four cows, twelve sheep, a pony, and ——"

"Oh, stop, mamma, for mercy's sake, stop," wailed her daughter. "I don't want cows nor pony; just let me keep my own sweet liberty, and stay here with you and father."

"'Deed, then, and that's jist what ye can't do; hearken to her, Mike," addressing a burly countryman who sauntered in, smoking a "dhudheen." "She says she won't get married. Did ye ever listen to such talk?"

Mike glared furiously at his rebellious daughter, and then ordered:

"You go and milk the cows, and be ready at six to-morrow morning to drive to the chapel at Liscannor; no nonsense, now. As if yer mother and meself were not married in the same way. Sure, I niver set eyes on her pretty face until

I saw her before the altar blushing like a peony, and it's happy and content we have been these twenty years, eh, Mollie?"

Mrs. Mulvaney nodded.

"True for ye, Mike, and it's the good husband ye have been to me, agra. God bless ye. Hurry up, Sheila, and come back quickly to plait yer hair and ready yerself."

But Sheila had vanished.

. . . . . .

A tall, dark girl walked through the meadows, balancing a milk-can on the top of the thick coils of black hair crowning her shapely head, and as she walked she sang, not because her heart rejoiced, for she was indeed weighed down with grief, but from force of habit.

"'Where are you goin' to, my pretty maid?'"
"'I'm goin' a milkin', sir,' she said."

A man's deep baritone broke in and continued the rhyme:

"May I go with you, my pretty maid?"

A handsome young fellow emerged from the grove as Sheila approached.

"Terry! Oh, Terry!" she cried, and she laid down her can and ran towards him with outstretched hands.

"The top of the mornin' to you, me dear. You are a bit late to-night, eh? But what's up? You look as if ye had buried the young heifer."

"Oh, Terry, dear, don't joke; my heart is broken," she moaned.

They were in the shadow of the trees now, so he put his arm round her pretty waist and drew her towards him.

"Well, but what is wrong, mavourneen; the ould folk all right, eh?"

"Oh, they are well enough," she answered, "but, Terry, they are goin' to marry me to-morrow. What am I to do? Sure, I can't give ye up, Terry dear. Couldn't we go over the seas—run away to Queenstown, and take the steamer to America? I have got three pounds of me very own—butter money—and ye could work your passage out."

"Is it me that would lave my poor ould father, and the poor man not able to do a hand's turn for himself, let alone to take care of the farm? I'm ashamed of ye, Sheila Mulvaney, to ask me to do such a thing." He spoke reprovingly, a tender reproach in his deep, grey eyes.

She drew away from him with cold disdain.

"Very well, Mr. Darcy," she said, haughtily, "I see now what your love is worth, and—and—I'll just be wishing you a good evening."

She hurried away, but he ran after her.

"Let me help ye milk the cows, anyway, Sheila," he pleaded.

"Don't, please, call me Sheila any more. I shall be a married woman to-morrow, and it would not be becoming to have a boy like you a Sheila-ing me. I don't want your help, thanks."

However, Terry insisted on milking the long-waiting beasts, and the girl, in spite of her protestations, was glad to watch him, drinking in every tone of his mellow voice, and letting her eyes dwell lovingly on his handsome, clear-cut features. For a moment her hand rested caressingly on his curly hair, but as he glanced up smiling she withdrew it.

They walked back through the grove and the meadows to the boreen leading to her cottage. He handed her the can, and said, "Good-bye, Sheila. I will call you Sheila to-night, anyway. Good-night, dear. The blessed saints and Holy Mary have you always in their keepin'."

He bent his head and gently kissed her forehead.

"Good-bye, oh, good-bye, my own Terry," she sobbed, and breaking from him ran quickly home.

The man watched her retreating figure with a queer smile puckering the corners of his mobile mouth, and a somewhat mischievous and mocking expression in his grey eyes.

"God bless her, and the dear saints guard her," he murmured, as he turned away, and then humming "I'm goin' a-milkin'," he disappeared into the darkness.

. . . . . .

"It's the sore heart I have this day, mamma," Sheila said the following morning, as she fastened up the heavy coils of her dark hair.

Mrs. Mulvaney shook her head.

"You must cheer up, agra; don't you know it's the custom with us, and when all is said and done one man is much the same as another. Don't worry, darlin', here's a nice cup of hot tay for ye, it will warm the cockles of your poor heart. And here's me own brooch to fasten the bit of red ribbon round your neck, and a silver watch and chain yer father bought for ye; and Joe Mooney has lent us his jaunting car to drive to Liscannor chapel; and there will be shoals of the neighbours there. And sure, afterwards it's the grand spread we will be havin'—lashins of everything, and ould Dan to play the fiddle, so hurry, asthore, and don't keep the ould man waitin'."

"Yes, mamma, I am quite ready. No, I can't drink the tea. You forget I am going to Holy Communion."

A very sad and woe-begone bride was Sheila Mulvaney when she arrived at the chapel by the sea. Cold and grey the waves were, cold and grey her future life would be. She must go to Confession, so she entered the box, sore troubled and distressed, and as she told her woes, and her few little sins as well, the good old priest found it a difficult task to soothe and comfort, but at last he succeeded in calming her.

Then, as she assisted at Holy Mass, and knelt at the rails to receive Holy Communion, peace at last descended on her

troubled soul. "God wills it," she told herself, praying as she had never before prayed. "Oh, dear Holy Mary, our Mother of Pity, have pity on me. Pray for me, that I may always be resigned to the holy will of our dear Lord."

So she implored, and as she prayed gradually forgot where she was; she scarce knew what was passing around her. Apparently without conscious volition she found she was standing in front of the altar. Someone was speaking; what was the voice saying?

The marriage service was actually going on; but oh, dear God, what was this?

Suddenly she was wide awake, alert, every nerve quivering; that dear voice—she looked up and met the kind eyes smiling down on her.

"I, Terence, take thee, Sheila, to be my wedded wife——"

Almost she had swooned for very joy; but now it was her turn: "I, Sheila, take thee, Terence," she repeated, and then a strong hand took hers, and the plain gold ring was placed on her finger.

"For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, till death does us part——"

"Death shall not part us," she whispered softly. "For ever, oh, my love, for ever."

"Terry, you wretch, why did you never tell me it was yourself and no other man?" Sheila asked, as they sat side by side on Joe Mooney's jaunting car.

"Nobody asked me, ma'am, he said," replied Terence, laughing boyishly as he sang the old refrain. And so singing and chatting they drove through a now warm and sunlit land into a new world—

"The midst thereof being paved with love."

The Last Pansies.

See here, the last thought of the garden . . .
  One for you, one for me, one for love.
Now lives not a bud or a blossom
  My affection to tell and to prove.

But these I discovered still blooming
  'Neath the wall, in the kiss of the sun,
Forgetful that fickle November
  Brings frost when the daylight is done.

Of you is the thought ever welcome,
  Your love is a warmth to my heart;
For me, perchance, twilight is falling,
  Ere the chill of death puts us apart.

MOTHER ST. JEROME.

"The Way of Offering."

MANY ways there are by which men may give "Glory to God in the Highest"; but of these there are four chief ways: the way of service, the way of knowledge, the way of suffering, the way of offering.

Not hidden from the "sons of reading" whom Mobhi had gathered around him at Glasnevin to train them in the wisdom of the saints was this lore. "Once upon a time a great church was built by Mobhi.[1] The clerics were considering what each of them would like to have in the church. 'I should like,' saith Ciaran, 'its full of church-children to attend the [canonical] hours.' 'I should like,' saith Cainnech, 'to have its full of books to serve the sons of Life.' 'I should like,' saith Comghall, 'its full of affliction and disease to be in my own body to subdue me, and to repress me.' Then Colomb Cille chose its full of gold and silver to cover relics and shrines withal."

In the Year of Wonders, 1916, it might almost seem that there was granted to Ireland the fulfilment of the wishes spoken by each of her four saint-sons so many centuries ago. Ciaran's wish, "the way of service," was given to her when in the wilderness to which she had been banished by the seeming failure of her dearest hopes there was suddenly heard the Voice of One crying aloud to her to take up again her old task, to send forth her sons on the ancient paths of missionary enterprise that had been worn by the feet of Columban and Gall, of Fursey and Kilian; to gather into the Church of God from among the children of the heathen in far-off China "its full of church-children to attend the hours."[2] Cainnech's wish, "books to serve the sons of Life," found its fulfilment when it was known that the glorious gifts made to Ireland by An t-Athair Peadar were about to be crowned by the most glorious of all—the Scriptures in her own tongue. And Comghall's wish! Ah, in what measure has not *that* been granted to her! Shall we ever be able to look upon the Paschal Moon again without a thought of the year when its white perfection was stained by the reek of blood, by the smoke of fiery ruins? As long as we live, shall one of us ever listen to the bird-song that fills May mornings without hearing above their quivering

[1] "Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore" (Whitley Stokes), p. 174.

[2] It will be in the vivid recollection of our readers that the Maynooth Mission to China was inaugurated in the memorable summer of 1916.

notes the echoes of the rifle volleys that silenced for ever our noblest ones, our sweetest singers? The way of suffering! Truly in 1916 Ireland walked it. Along its blood-stained windings she followed him who trod it, for her dear sake, from Bennet Strand to Pentonville. Up its steep and thorn-paved incline has she not climbed—not once but countless times—keeping step with stumbling, manacled feet—the feet of those who bear their chains that she may be free?

In truth all men will say that in 1916 the wish of Ciaran, the wish of Cainnech, the wish of Comghall have been given to Ireland. What of the wish of Colomb Cille?: "Gold and silver to cover relics and shrines withal"? That, too, has been given her—and in a manner so striking that even the least impressionable must marvel at it, in the Honan Hostel Chapel, Cork.

It is impossible to open the slim, grey volume[3] (that has something nunlike in its chaste and exquisite simplicity of habit), and to read what Sir John Robert O'Connell has to tell us in it of the ideals which found expression in the building of the Collegiate Chapel of St. Finn Barr without a great stirring of the heart. The past and future of Ireland lie here together—bound in the golden bond of Ireland's invincible fidelity to the Faith—Sir John's graphic pen has had power to conjure up for those of us who may never see with our own eyes the splendid sight, the picture of the chapel full of its congregation of "young Catholic Irishmen, students of an university." Again and again he returns to them—making it clear that their needs were always before those who planned the chapel, in all its details. It was to house *their* Guest that the limestone of their own country was quarried by the labour of their own countrymen; that it was cut, and shaped, and carved, and put stone upon stone by the skilled hands of Irish builders, under the direction of a master who had gone for his inspiration to the most authentic Irish sources. Irish craftsmen filled with Irish reverence and Irish enthusiasm have fashioned the altar and the tabernacle for their glorious purpose: that He may abide there day and night, and wait for the young men's coming to Him. The same noble Irish stone that furnished the material for the edifice has been used for the altar: "one great slab of limestone; of ample proportions it stands on five pilasters or strypes of the same limestone, finely carved with different types of Celtic crosses by the hand work of a sculptor. There is no reredos or gradine; and from the plain altar table rises a tabernacle of the same stone made in the form of an early Celtic reliquary. That this tabernacle should be made a note of splendour and of beauty one of the arts of early Ireland has been called to our aid, the art of enamel work."

[3] "The Honan Hostel Chapel, Cork: Some Notes on the Building and the Ideals which Inspired It." By Sir John Robert O'Connell, M.A., LL.D. Cork: Guy and Co., 1916. Price 2/-.

And while the young men—

"The brave young men, our love, our pride, our promise,"
on whom "our hopes are set
In manliness, in kindliness, in justice
To make Erin a nation yet;
Self-respecting, self-relying, self-advancing
In union or in severance, free and strong"—

kneel at the feet of Him Whose delight is to be among them, the men and women who gave Ireland her golden past look down upon them from the painted windows:—"the patron Saints of the dioceses of Munster, the saints closely bound up with Cork . . . the three wonder-working saints of Ireland"—marshalled around their Risen Lord, they stretch along the light path down the nave: Finn Barr, and Albert, and Declan, and Ailbe, and Fachtna, and Munchin, and Ita, and Colman, and Brendan, and Gobnait, and Carthage, and Flannan—a glowing splendid company.

On no part of the chapel has more thought been lavished than on these windows. "They have been designed, cut, and completed by Irish artists and craftsmen working in Ireland, and it is believed that they are finer in design and in execution than any stained-glass work to be found in Ireland which has been imported from England or the continent, and that they prove Irish artists and craftsmen are capable of producing windows in painted glass as good in design and workmanship as any work to be found elsewhere." The treasures of Irish legend and Irish symbolism, the hidden stores of Irish poetry, the richness of Irish colouring and design have been harvested to add to the appeal and suggestiveness of these windows. And as the coloured light streams through them, and we think of it falling on the bright heads of our Irish boys, there is borne in upon us a new conception of our history. Are not the golden past and the golden future here visibly joined together—in rays of coloured light?

Nor are the sorrowful days between the ages of gold quite unrecorded. A host of details recalls to us that Ireland has suffered with her suffering Lord. Though the east window shows Him "risen, glorious, triumphant," wearing "the marks of His Divinity in His splendid crimson robe, in His royal jewels"—He bears in His side and hands and feet the mark of His wounds. So it is with the young men of the Irish race, and with this chapel which was built for them. Not unfittingly has "the Canticle of the Three Children in the Fiery Furnace" supplied the inspiration for the design of the mosaic work in the floor. In the midst of persecution, torture, and agony the Irish race, like the young men in the Fiery Furnace, has ever given praise to God in all His works. Sir John O'Connell has confessed to us how

vividly the old Irish verses were before his mind when he sought a design for the floor that was to be trodden by the children of this martyr race:—

"I offer Thee—
Every flower that ever grew,
Every bird that ever flew,
Every wind that ever blew,
Good God!

"Every thunder rolling,
Every church-bell tolling,
Every leaf and sod.
Laudamus Te."

Out of the fiery furnace of Ireland's penal days that cry resounded—having curious affinities, as Sir John has pointed out, with the Canticle of the Three Children. (Daniel, chap. iii., 57-86).

And the penal days have not ended. Is not the very existence of this Honan Hostel Chapel a protest against the very latest of the penal laws—that which disgraces the "Irish Universities Act of 1908." A clause embodied in this piece of twentieth century legislation enacted that whatever sums of money might be provided for the new University or any of its constituent colleges, no part of it should be applied for "the provision or maintenance of any church, chapel, or other place of religious worship or observance."

God has His own way of working out His own designs. It may have been that if "the first need of Christian university life—a chapel"—had been procurable as a matter of course, the same thought and care and ingenuity and loving attention to every detail would not have been lavished on this collegiate chapel of St. Finn Barr, making it the perfect thing it is—the perfect expression of Irish religious and artistic ideals, the perfect achievement of Irish hearts, and minds, and eyes, and hands. It may well have been that but for the very operation of the penal laws, barring the doors of the professions to Catholics during so many generations, the wealth acquired by the Honan family "during several generations in *commerce* in the City of Cork" might not have been available. It is not without reason that a reviewer in a recent number of *Studies* speaks of the "providential destiny which placed the disposal and direction of the munificent generosity of the Honan family in the hands of such men as Sir John R. O'Connell, Sir B. C. A. Windle, President of University College, Cork, and Mr. J. F. MacMullen, the architect. They have brought to their task not only enlightened taste and feeling, but a sincere desire to revive the great religious and artistic traditions of their native land."

HELENA CONCANNON.

[P.S.—I wish I had space to tell here of the furnishing of this marvellous chapel, that is as memorable in its own way as St. Louis's *Sainte Chapelle*. No one interested in contemporary Irish art can afford to miss learning of the exquisite products of the Dun Emer Guild, whom Miss Evelyn Gleeson banded together to weave and work the banner of St. Finn Barr, the dossal, and the antependium for the altar, and the carpets for the sanctuary. Mr. Oswald Reeves's enamels for the altar—including the very beautiful enamel door for the tabernacle; Mr. Joseph Tierney's most lovely altar cards; Miss Eleanor Kelly's exquisite work on the missals' bindings; the vestments—gorgeous examples of Irish design and of Irish elaboration—that set their workers, the Cork girls in Messrs. Egan's workshop, in the front rank of craftswomen; the monstrance, sanctuary lamp, processional cross, altar crucifix, and candle-sticks wrought by the Dublin silversmiths of Messrs. Edmond Johnson, Ltd., from designs of Professor W. A. Scott—all are steeped in Irish feeling and sentiment, and bear "their part in making this chapel an example of what Irish skill and craftsmanship can achieve."

The stained glass windows are the work of Miss Sarah Purser and Mr. Henry Clarke. The stone carvings in the chapel have been wrought by Henry Emery and workmen, "selected from the Cork Technical School." (A notable tribute this to the work done in this School.) The builders of the chapel were John Sisk & and Son, Cork.—H.C.]

Between the Thresholds.

When I between the threshold stand
Where death's great army waits,
And Life yields up her brief command,
And locks her fragile gates;
When on life's troubled, wistful day
My last pale sun has set,
I'll turn me to the unknown way
With scarcely a regret.

For never lay my anchor deep
Among earth's turbid seas,
Past her confines my soul would leap
Responsive to a breeze
That wafted me a far-off "Hail"
Whence God His secret shields,
And sometimes almost swept the veil
From the Eternal Fields.

MAEVE CAVANAGH.

A Sister's Sacrifice.

By AGNES M. DUFFY.

ROBERT AYLMER turned the knob of the door with a hand that trembled somewhat, and his boyish face showed a little pale under its healthy tan. He could feel, too, that his heart was beating more violently than usual, and smiled to think that he, a cool, hard-headed doctor who had made a speciality of nerve diseases, could be so agitated merely because he was about to meet for the first time his uncle's young wife. True, he had never expected to see a mistress reign over the home that his uncle had shared with him since his boyhood, though it had ceased to be his, through necessity, since he had taken out his degree in medicine, for his practice lay at the other end of the city. Oddly enough, he had not ever entertained the idea of his uncle's possible marriage some day, so that it had come as a sort of mild shock when he had received a letter from him a couple of months previously, announcing his forthcoming nuptials. After the first surprise, Robert Aylmer had felt genuinely glad, for his uncle's life at ordinary times was a lonely one. John Aylmer had been away from home on a tour that concerned partly his health, and partly his financial interests, and in his travels had been captivated by the beauty of the young girl whom he had just brought home as his bride.

Pulling himself together with an effort, Robert pushed open the door and entered. Outside dusk had fallen, but here the whole place was radiant with a softly brilliant light that set off the beautiful room to the utmost. A man with firm, well-chiselled features and black hair streaked with white, stood in front of the fire with his elbow resting on the mantelpiece. Near him in a low armchair sat a small, white-clad figure with her hands clasped about her knees, and her head thrown forward, gazing into the fire. The attitude struck Robert as peculiar. It was almost troubled.

"Well, Bob!" said his uncle, genially, as he came forward. "How are you, my boy? Glad to see me back again, eh, and not unaccompanied? Barbara, this is my nephew."

The little white-clad figure arose and held out a small bejewelled hand with a smile. The smile called back Bob's natural composure. She was but a child, he told himself, though she carried herself with a woman's grace, but he could not help noticing that deep in her blue eyes there

lurked an expression half of fear, half of anxiety, which cast a shadow over her otherwise cloudless face. The expression, like her attitude a moment previously, puzzled him.

"I am so glad to meet you," she said. "Indeed, I can assure you," with a smiling glance at her husband, "that I have heard so much about you that you do not at all seem to me like a stranger."

The young man smiled in return. "Thank you," he said. "I am happy to welcome you to this old city, and to this old home, which was mine for many years, thanks to Uncle John."

"Tut-tut," said John Aylmer. "What would my life have been without the boy? You see, I did not know *you* then, Barbara."

She smiled again and sat down. They talked together, all three, for half-an-hour, after which little Mrs. Aylmer complained of feeling fatigued after the journey, and went upstairs. When the two men were alone John Aylmer turned to his nephew.

"Well, Bob?" he said.

"You mean, what do I think of her?" said the young man. "She is very pretty and charming, uncle, and seems very proud of you."

"I am glad you like her," said John Aylmer, but his tone implied a further question. Bob looked up and met the enquiring glance of his eye.

"She seems to be a little bit troubled over something," said the doctor. "Sometimes her face gets clouded. Have you noticed it? There seems to be a shadow underneath her gaiety."

The older man turned and stared into the fire, his brows drawn together into a straight black line. Then he wheeled round quickly and faced his companion.

"I think I understand what it is," he said. "Bob, I am going to tell you something which you must never mention, least of all to her. Barbara is, or rather was, a Roman Catholic."

Robert started suddenly, but made no comment.

"I met her first in Brown's office in Limerick," went on his uncle, after a pause. "She was a typist, or something of that sort. She comes of a good family, but poor. Her only living relative is a sister, who is also in Brown's employ. I confess, Bob, that I was attracted by Barbara from the first. When at length I asked her to be my wife and she consented I was as happy as though she had been the daughter of a duke. I told her, of course, that I was a Protestant, and that I expected she would come with me to my Church after our marriage. At first she protested, then she looked frightened, and gradually she yielded. I think," he added, with a grim smile, "that I have by this time almost knocked her religious scruples on the head."

Bob listened quietly, though the pale colour had crept

back into his face once more. He looked up as his uncle paused.

"And her sister?" he asked.

John Aylmer frowned again. "She is a tenacious Papist," he said. "I liked her, and for Barbara's sake offered her a home with us on condition that she too would conform to my religious views, but she flouted the proposal with indignation. She is quite young, too, mind you, about your own age, I should think, and pretty, though not like Barbara."

"She at least had the courage of her convictions," said Robert.

"Convictions—pshaw! Superstitious nonsense. See what she has lost through her convictions. Why could she not be sensible, like Barbara?"

"I think I admire her all the more for adhering to her religion," said Bob.

"Hello, when did you come by Papistical sympathies?" rapped out John Aylmer, sharply.

"Nonsense, uncle. What I mean is that I admire the girl's force of character in refusing a wealthy and luxurious home on conscientious principles."

"Then Barbara . . . . ?" The older man's voice trailed off interrogatively.

"We shan't discuss her in that way," said Bob, trying to speak lightly. "She is a dainty little sample of womanhood and should make a charming mistress for this dear old house. And now," glancing at his watch and rising to his feet, "I must be off. I shall probably be round again to-morrow. Good-night, uncle."

The young man rode homewards in a thoughtful mood. The childish face of Barbara Aylmer seemed to look at him out of the shadows, turn where he would. As he leaped lightly from the tram at the street corner nearest his home she was still uppermost in his thoughts.

"Poor child," he said, under his breath. "Was it the lure of wealth that tempted her to play her conscience false?"

From which it may be judged that John Aylmer's remark as to his nephew's Papistical sympathies was not altogether without foundation.

And then Bob mentally tripped himself up remorsefully.

"Who am I," he thought, "that I should judge her?"

But he crossed the threshold of his home in a saddened frame of mind, and during the night a pair of large, frightened blue eyes haunted his dreams persistently.

. . . . . .

One night, on returning home from hospital duty, Bob Aylmer found a woman awaiting his coming in the hall. She was poorly but neatly dressed, and rose respectfully at his entrance.

"I suppose I am wanted," he said, in the pleasant manner that endeared him to all his patients, rich and poor alike.

"Yes, sir, at once if you can come. It's a poor girl that has taken bad, sir," and she gave him the address of a tenement in a poor quarter of the city.

"I shall follow you immediately," he said, and having put on a heavy overcoat, for the night was chilly, ordered his car to be brought round. A few minutes later the motor was threading its serpentlike way through the network of streets in the direction of the slums.

He found the house easily enough, and crossing the dark hallway passed up the creaking staircase to the second floor. At the third door on the right he stopped and entered. Then he drew back, a little surprised.

The room was scantily furnished, but neat in the extreme. One end of it was curtained off as a bedroom, the remainder forming a tiny sitting-room. The whole atmosphere was one of refinement. In a shabby armchair by the fire-place a young girl sat with a shawl thrown about her shoulders, her hands stretched out over the few red embers in the grate. At his approach she turned and tried to rise.

"I am Doctor Aylmer," he said, pleasantly.

She gave a perceptible start.

"It was good of you to come so promptly, doctor," she said, in a cultured voice. "When the weakness seized me a kind neighbour volunteered to fetch medical help. I am glad you have come, though I feel much better by this."

When he had replaced the stethoscope after examination he sat down and regarded the patient closely.

"Do you have these fainting-fits often?" he asked.

"Frequently of late," she replied. Then, reading something in his face which he could not quite conceal, she added quietly: "I suppose, doctor, I have not very long to live?"

"I should not say that," he answered quickly, marvelling at her calmness. "You *may* live for months—perhaps years."

As he was about to write out the prescription he looked up, pen in hand.

"May I have the name, please?" he asked.

"Mary Deering," she said.

It was now Robert's turn to start. He gave her one quick, earnest glance, and then wrote rapidly.

"I shall leave this in the chemist's myself," he said, rising. Then, waiving her thanks, he added: "You are alone here?"

"Yes, but Mrs. Dwyer, who went to fetch you, comes in to me frequently. She is a good neighbour, God bless her."

"Amen," he said, involuntarily, then hastily added: "I shall call again to-morrow, Miss Deering. Good-night."

"Good-night, doctor. Take care of the turning, for the passage is dark."

"I shall be careful, thank you," he said, and descended the stairs, feeling as though "the light that never was on sea and land," the light, not of earth, that he had seen to rest on Mary Deering's sweet, patient face, shone around him as he went.

The following evening on re-visiting the tenement he found his patient in bed, with the devoted Mrs. Dwyer seated near at hand. Experienced as he was, Robert was shocked at the sudden change for the worse in the young girl's condition. When Mrs. Dwyer had left the room, she turned her earnest grey eyes full upon him.

"Doctor Aylmer," she said, "pardon my asking the question, but are you any relative of Mr. John Aylmer, the well-known financier of this city?"

"I am his nephew," he replied.

"How strange," she said. "Well, doctor, there is something I am anxious to tell you. I hope you will forgive me if I wound in the slightest degree your religious feelings, but I feel that I am dying, and I——"

She paused a moment; then went on: "Mr. Aylmer's wife is my only sister. He married her, as you know, about a year ago. It was a great grief to me that Barbara should think of wedding one not of her Faith, but when she consented to be married in the Protestant Church it broke my heart. A few months after her marriage I resigned my position and came up here to Dublin in order to be near her, though of course we have never met. For a time I was able to support myself as a visiting governess and music teacher, but after a little my health broke down and now I am nearing the end. But that, I trust, is in answer to my prayer, as I offered my life to God for the conversion of my sister. Doctor, I should like to see Barbara before I die. Do you think she would come if I sent for her?"

"I am sure she would," he answered, a suspicious tremor in his voice. "You would wish to see her to-night? Then I shall go and fetch her straight away."

"Oh! how good you are!" said the girl, gratefully.

"Nonsense!" he replied, turning aside to hide his emotion. "I shall send in Mrs. Dwyer to stay with you till I return."

Ten minutes later he entered his uncle's study, where John Aylmer was sitting alone. He looked up with a smile at sight of his nephew.

"Uncle John," said the young man, "where is Barbara?"

"I expect she is upstairs with a certain precious morsel of humanity. Do you want her particularly?"

"Her sister, who is dying, does," said the doctor.

John Aylmer's brow darkened suddenly.

"She shall not go," he said sternly. "I know all the girl would say. No, that cannot be. Barbara's mind must not be disturbed."

"But this is a case of life and death," said Robert. "You surely will not prevent the sisters from meeting for the last time? Miss Deering has not many weeks to live."

"Well," said the older man, after a pause, "if Barbara goes, I accompany her."

"By all means," said Robert.

A few minutes later Barbara came down fully dressed, looking very white and frail in her rich dark furs. In silence her husband helped her into the waiting car, and no word was spoken by any member of the trio till the tenement was reached.

At sight of the pale face among the pillows Barbara gave a choking sob and fell on her knees by the bedside, burying her face in her hands. John Aylmer's natural delicacy of feeling prevailed over his bigotry, and he slipped out of the room followed by his nephew, leaving the sisters alone.

"I think, uncle," said Robert, a little later, "that you had better return. If Barbara wishes to leave here to-night I shall see her home safely."

Somewhat reluctantly John Aylmer obeyed. Later in the evening Barbara came out to where the young man was standing in the passage, her face wet with tears.

"Bob," she said, "I want you to drive me to the Catholic church in —— Street."

"With pleasure," he answered. "One moment, while I call Mrs. Dwyer."

He entered the beautiful church by her side with a strange feeling of awe, and saw her approach and kneel down close to a confessional. The tabernacle lamp, glimmering redly in the darkness, fascinated his gaze in such a manner that he stood there watching it and wondering at its significance while the moments fled by unnoticed. Then all at once a tremendous wave of feeling surged over him, leaving him icy cold, and trembling from head to foot. Overwhelmed by the strange emotion he fell on his knees, and so remained, his eyes still fixed on the red light afar off, until someone came and touched him on the arm. It was Barbara. He arose and followed her into the open air like one in a dream, but conscious within his soul of a new-born faith in the Eucharistic God.

Barbara did not see her husband at all that night. Next morning she entered the breakfast room just as he was sitting down to the meal.

"Well, darling," he said fondly, as she approached, and put out his hand to draw her towards him.

She did not, however, take the hand, but remained standing motionless at the opposite end of the table.

"John," she said, "I am going to ask a favour of you, and if you do not grant it I must bid farewell to you for ever."

"What is it, Barbara?" he asked, slowly.

"That you consent to our being married by a priest in a Catholic Church."

"Never!" he answered, bringing his clenched hand down on the table with a force that set the china dancing. "This is what your visit to that wretched place has resulted in. I knew no good would come of it."

"Then you refuse?" she asked, white to the lips.

"Absolutely."

"Then it must be good-bye, John, and for ever. Since you will not agree to that proposal I cannot remain with you as your wife."

With a sob she turned and went out of the room, swiftly, as though she feared her own weakness. But in the hall a strong hand was laid upon her arm.

"Barbara." It was her husband's voice. "Do not go. Since you will have it so, come along and let us be married all over again, though I know it's silly nonsense. But I should consent to a great deal before I'd consent to lose you, little woman."

That very evening Mary Deering was removed from her poor little room to her sister's stately home, where a few weeks later her beautiful death took place, so calmly, so peacefully, that it seemed like the tranquil falling asleep of a tired child for which grief would be out of place, though Robert Aylmer was not ashamed of his tears as he stood above the bed, and knew that the patient grey eyes had closed for ever.

. . . . . .

That all happened years ago. But would you know the further fruits of Mary Deering's sacrifice? Then come with me to the stately church in —— street, thronged with worshippers for morning Mass. Perhaps you recognise the man with iron-grey hair, and the pretty, golden-haired lady, with their two fair children, kneeling in one of the benches close to the Communion rails? How devout they are, you say. Yes, John Aylmer and his wife are model Catholics. But, turning your gaze to the altar, do you not see something familiar in the figure of the priest standing there, his face glowing like that of a seraph, his whole soul absorbed in the contemplation of the sacred mysteries? Yes, Father Paul was known once to the world as Doctor Robert Aylmer.

His conversion to Catholicity took place a few months after Mary Deering's death. Then, filled with spiritual happiness as he was, a longing for something even higher took possession of his soul, a longing called into being by the thought of Mary Deering's noble sacrifice. She had offered her life for the salvation of a single soul, could he not make a lesser sacrifice to be the means of saving many?

And so it was that Robert Aylmer had left all things for Him Who had looked on him and loved him.

To-day he is reverenced by many as a saint. He is still known and greatly beloved in the hospital where once he was visiting physician, and many a weary sufferer follows his figure with grateful eyes as he passes up and down the wards, healing the spiritual wounds of the sick as once he was wont to soothe their bodily infirmities.

"I always knew he would be a Catholic some day," Mrs. Dwyer often says to seven-year-old Bob, of whom, together with his brother and baby sister she is the devoted nurse. "But I never had hoped, dearie, to see him a priest as well."

"And I'm going to be a priest too, nursie, when I'm big," Bob says, with all the confidence of childhood.

"Perhaps so, dearie, perhaps so. Who knows?"

Whether Bob's childish prophecy will be fulfilled or not, only God can tell. His destiny, with other mysteries of the future, is hidden in the years that are to be.

A Hostel for Gaels.

IT is a thing we people of Irish-Ireland have often yearned for and talked about—a comfortable, homely hostel to which we could retire for rest and recreation, sure of an Irish atmosphere, of Irish speech, of Irish kindliness, of the comradeship and cheer that are only to be found among Gaels that know and commune with the great, loving heart of Eire.

Well, here it is at last, and I trust the most will be made of it, and that the patriotism and enterprise of those who have launched it will be well and suitably rewarded.

The Committee of the O'Curry Irish College, Carrigaholt, Co. Clare, have done many things that deserve praise and credit, but to my mind the biggest step forward is the throwing open of the spacious College as a hostel, with an Irish-speaking Registrar and an Irish-speaking bean a' tighe in charge, and Irish-speaking servants, and a thoroughly Irish atmosphere, and a tariff so modest that anybody bent on having a holiday can easily avail of all the advantages of a sojourn in such an ideal spot. And when I say that Brian O hUiginn (Brian O'Higgins) is the Registrar, and that Irish only is the language of his household, and that his cheery bean a' tighe has a hearty welcome for the guests of Colaiste Eoghain Ui Chomraidhe, I may surely add that the Committee have done their work wisely and well.

Cill Criodain, where the College is situated, enjoys a reputation as a health resort excelled only by one other spot in all Ireland, and in every respect it is an ideal place in which to find peace and strength after the worries and the labours of everyday life in the busy outside world. The College is seated in a cosy inlet of the lordly Shannon, with

the sheltering hills at its back, and though at times when winter is on the war-path, it has to combat many a strong gale, no intense cold is ever known there, while there is always a health-bearing breeze that is worth more than all the tonics from here to the North Pole. Right across the bay can be seen the holy island of Inis Cathaigh, where St. Senan and his monks lived and prayed; to the right, just three miles away, are the Kerry hills, and for miles to the rear you can count by the hundred the white-washed farm-houses of generous-hearted Clare, each seeming to invite you cheerily to "make yourself at home."

You could go out every day for a month from Carrigaholt College in all directions, and on each journey find something worth seeing and noting and talking about, some relic of a sad or glorious past, some beauty-spot unequalled in all the world for natural charm, some pleasant nook in which to sit and rest and dream. And everywhere the hearty salutation and the kindly smile of a people that in spite of spiritual and temporal struggles, of grim fights against tyranny in the days of rack-renting landlordism, of battles against souperism when famine and death were at their doors, have still retained the geniality and gaiety of the unbeaten Gaelic race. Not far away are Loop Head and the famous Bridge of Ross, with its sheer drop of three hundred feet to the dark waves below; quite close is the well-preserved castle of the MacMahons, dear to Irish hearts for all time as the fortress around which Lord Clare drilled and trained his brave Dragoons who were to win glory undying on "Ramillie's bloody field," and at Fontenoy and many another battlefield in France and Flanders, when face to face with the foe that had scourged and devastated their native Clare.

Right beside the College is the holy well of St. Criodain, and two ruined chapels also bearing his name. To the well come pilgrims every year from Limerick and Tipperary and Kerry as well as from all parts of Clare, and many are the tales told by the people around, of cures effected and favours received through the intercession of the sainted disciple of St. Senan. The well was formerly in a much better state of preservation than at present, but it experienced the gentle touch of Civilisation and Christianity, as did many another sacred spot throughout the universe. In the year 1814 the British Government erected a strong fort at Cill Criodain point (just beside the well) for the purpose of giving a warm welcome to their dear friends, the French, should they think of paying a visit to that part of the United Kingdom called Ireland. The soldiers who garrisoned it were withdrawn some forty years ago, but a short time previous to their departure several of them paid a visit to the holy well, and in the interests of Civilisation, they smashed and ruined everything that was breakable and flung the simple offerings of faithful pilgrims into the Shannon. Not a man of them

was alive within a month. They were stricken down with a malignant disease like cholera and actually rotted away. This is no fable. There are plenty of people still living in the neighbourhood who remember the time and the incident well, and who can show you the spot where the vandals are buried not far away from the scene of their unholy deeds.

There are other memories in the place also—memories of good fights, memories of brave men shielded from sleuth-hounds when the rewards offered for them were sore temptations to the poor, who guarded them as they would their own children, and eventually got them safely away to a land where they were free. There are memories of men like William Smith O'Brien, and it is a strange coincidence that the chief founder of the O'Curry College—Miss Nellie O'Brien—is the grand-daughter of the fearless '48 leader. There are a hundred other interesting things I could tell my readers about this corner of West Clare, but I cannot go on indefinitley, and it would be better far for them to do as I have done, *viz.*, go to the O'Curry College for a holiday and find for themselves the thousand charms and delights that abound on every side. If they go once they will go again, and love the place all the more after each visit. The great event of the year in the life of the district is, of course, the summer session of the College, when students throng from all parts of Ireland, and make the old place ring with song and laughter and Gaelic speech. There will be two sessions this year—one in July and one in August. My advice to every reader of this article, with even a limited knowledge of Irish is—write to the Registrar for a copy of the syllabus, and then—go to Carrigaholt.

TOMAS O RIAIN.

Lourdes and Hednesford.

Father Boyle's "Letter" to all lovers of Our Lady of Lourdes in our present issue will be read with interest and devotion. Father Boyle's work needs no recommendation from us—the granting of the Apostolic Benediction by His Holiness Pope Benedict XV. is sufficient indication of its importance.

Coir na Teine.

Sreann Slan.

Cuireadh cúgam cóip de'n cur nua d' "Irish Fun," an t-aon páipéar Gaedhilge amháin atá againn i nÉirinn, agus d'iarradh orm focal nó dó do scríobh 'na thaobh annsa coir na teine. Cuirim fáilte 'gus fíche roimir agus deirim gur thuag é gan deic gcinn de páipéaraibh dá leithéid againn cun ár gcroidhe do tógáil agus cun Sreann Slan Gaedhlach do cosnamh agus do leathnú an fuaid na tíre. An rud go nglaodhtar Sreann air de gnáth annsa—an rud a reoltar cúgainn annsa ó Sarana i bhfirinn leabair agus páipéir—níl ann ach malacán an aigne Gallda, agus dá mbeadh rprid ceart 'nár ndaoinibh ní leigfidhe irteach i nÉirinn é i n-ao' con. Loiteann sé aigne an aora óig agus ní deinean sé taithe d'aoinne ach do'n bfear call a cuireann cúgainn é. Ní Sreann de'n tragar céadna atá le fágail agat i-n "Irish Fun" i n-ao' con, ach Sreann Slan, rimhidhe chroidheamail a bainean gáirdhe agat i ngan fior duit agus nach bfágann smál ná drochsmaointe 'na diaidh. Tá na Siotaí Gaedhilge do dear an fad ann, agus 'sí mo guidhe go bfeicfimíd fós é agus gan ann ó shin go deire ach Gaedhilg. Pingin an cóip atá an "Irish Fun" agus cuirtear amach é gach mí. Cuirfear cóip trí do bport chugat gach mí go ceann bliana ar 1s. 8d. Ag 87 Sráid Uach. na Drisheóige i mBaile Átha Cliath atá an oifig ag an té a cuirtear amach é. Go n-éirighe leis go geal agus le gach páipéar nó leabar Slan a noctan aigne na nGaedheal dúinn.

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"An Lóchrann."

Ó's rud é go bfuilim ag tagairt do páipéaraibh Gaedhealacha, níor mhór dom molad do thabairt do'n teachtaire binn a tagann chugainn anoear gach mí agus ualach de sgéaltaibh agus de rannaibh agus de sean-foclaibh agus de thomarannaibh 'gá n-iomchar aige—"An Lóchrann" geal gleódhte. Ba cheart do gach aonne atá ábalta ar Gaedhilg do léigeam, ba cheart dó-san "An Lóchrann" do cheannach gach mí agus gach line de—iomlán fóghlaí agus uile—do léigeam le ponn. Deir An t-Athair Peadar Ó Laoghaire gur ar "An Lóchrann" atá an Gaedhilg ir fearr a cuirtear i scríbh i nÉirinn indiu agus muna bfuil fior aige-san cad ir Gaedhilg mar ann ní lá fós é. Bíonn na táinte sgéal á mbailiú do'n "Lóchrann" ag daoinibh ósa na Mumhan agus iriad na sgéalta céadna atá go binn agus go fuinneamhail. Tá beirt Gaedheal sgoide i bfeighil an páipéir seo—sé "An Seabhac" an fear Eagair agus Seán

Coibin, Baile An Teampaill, i gCorcaig an fear Gnóta agus seisean a cuireadh cóip chugat thíd an bport gach mí go ceann bliana ar 2s. agus dá cóip ar 3s. sa bliain. Mar an scéal é go bfuil ag éirighe go bleáth leis "An Lóchrann." Conáchan air!

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"An Crann."

Páipéar dear eile é seo—páipéar Gaedhilge agus béarla a cuirtear amach i dTir Connaill gach práithe. Ní facaim mé go fóill ach an céad uimir agus do thaitin sé go mór liom. Filidheachta, sgéalta, airtidhe, sean-focail agus sgéilini grinn—táid go léir ar an "gCrann" so d'fár i dtír na laochra agus ir binn agus ir aibid an uile cheann aca. An obair atá ar lucht "An Chruinn" a déanamh, atá sí luaidhte 'san céad uimir ag An Earboc Ó Dómhnaill. "Tá an oidhche thagainn," ar sesean, "agus tá fáinne geal an lae ar amharc. Ir mitid do sgiobadh na litridheachta a beit ar air ag éirighe ann annr an tuairceapt. Ceana féin cluinteam a gut annseo agus annsúd a n-oibreacha sgrúdhaighthe chirte. Acht tá sin-sléar cnuasachta a gcóta ann tarrtail, agus leis an sléar sin a chur a bhéim ir eadh sgaithe 'An Chruinn.' Tá rud amháin nach ndéanfaidh 'An Crann,' agus sin nach dtabharfidh sé dídean do aon adhbar achmasain."

Má ceannuighmíd na páipéiri seo agus cinn eile dá leithéid agus ma léighimíd go cruinn agus go hairneac iad tiocfaidh taithe dúinn féin agus d'Éirinn ar, óir beidhmíd ag éirighe níor Gaedhealaighe agus níor bhrighmhara i n-agaidh an lae. Ní gádh dúinn aon páipéar ó Sarana do cheannach, olc mait ná donaidhe—ir beag maitheas do deinadhas dúinn riamh!

MUIRIS NA MÓNA.

EOIN—Mile fáilte romhat!

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III. They will at all times observe the conditions under which the competitions will be held.

IV. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into *the* ***Guild of Blessed Gabriel***

WE fondly imagined at the opening of last month, because there came a few mild days, that all the storms and bitter days were over and past for many a month, but we were sadly deceived. April was almost as fierce as January, and the "soft April showers" the poet sings about were showers of hopping hailstones and there was no softness whatever in their touch. In keeping with the strange times that have come to this old world of ours, the weather has upset all calculations, and we had better not make any predictions regarding May or praise it in advance. It might maliciously turn out to be a twin sister of April and lower our prestige as prophets.

Mary's Month.

But it is the month set apart for the honour and praise and glory of God's Mother, and however the seasons or the times may change, she is ever the same—our true friend, our kind advocate, our unfailing guide, and our loving and tender Mother, who knows our faults and our failings, who has many a time experienced our ingratitude, but who is ever willing to hearken to our petitions, to take us by the hand when we call her name amid the shadows, and to lead us into the presence of Him whose footsteps she guided and whose sorrows she healed in childhood's changing days. O Mother Mary! help us and guard us and guide us and keep our thoughts ever fixed on the Goal thy Son has won for us! O Mother Mary! in this hour of trial watch over Ireland, our sorrowing and sorely-oppressed motherland, and help us to bring her out of the storms and the shadows into the pure light of her long-sought freedom! O Mother Mary! pray for Ireland in the May!

My Post Bag.

My first duty this month is to thank all the members who have made such kind and anxious inquiries about my cold, and to assure them that it has vanished completely, thank God, and that **Francis** is himself again. I am in great good humour, too, because despite the intervention of the holidays, my post-bag has been well filled this month, and all the letters are cheery and bright, although written to the accompaniment of howling winds and clattering hailstones. Ah, but sure what could daunt or damp the spirits of the members of our Guild. As usual, my first Easter message came from **Lilian Nally**—a big long letter, in the course of which she wrote: "The month of sun and shower and lingering shadow has stolen into our dear land once more, but this year in a garb of pure white snow. The air is filled with the tender songs of wooing feathered lovers mingling harmoniously with the gentle sigh of the mountain breeze. Gloom and sadness have vanished from the grey old world, as if by the touch of a magic wand, and all things awake to a new life, and the spirit of hope is everywhere." It will interest Lilian to know that her monthly messages to the Guild have been praised this month by several members, and that her prose poem of a couple of months ago inspired a new friend of ours—**B. M. O'Neill**—who is over the age for active membership, to write a ballad in praise of Blessed Gabriel's Guild. It is not quite up to publication standard, but it contains many beautiful thoughts and shows what a cultured mind the writer possesses. I hope to read further contributions from the same pen. Matters are moving to a crisis in the recruiting line, as the newspapers would say about Russia or America. Last month I was completely routed by a Drogheda army who challenged all and sundry to take the field in front of them. A Western commander—**Rita Carlos**—has accepted the challenge and has raised an army of **Forty New Recruits** to take the shine out of General Ada O'Neill. Listen to this from Rita: "When I saw Drogheda's thirty-one recruits last month I said to myself that no longer would I allow Ballina to take a back seat in the Guild, and although Drogheda has more members than Ballina at present, let the Droghedians remember that 'the West's awake,' and that the young Guilders I bring you this month are only the nucleus of a future influx of members for you, Francis. Henceforth it will be prominence or nothing for Connacht, supported by Ballina, in the Guild of Blessed Gabriel. So let Drogheda look out and remember that Connacht

> 'Hears adown the ages the slogan of the past;
> She sees the claymore glisten above each mountain head,
> She thrills to Cathal's summons, to Red Hugh's trumpet blast,
> And Humbert's martial tread.'

So, favouring the cause of small nations, Ballina has decided to support Carrick-on-Shannon, and by a friendly alliance, defend the name and fame of Connacht against the encroachments of other places. Here are the names of my recruits:—**May Healy, Michael MacMahon, May MacMahon, Chrissie MacMahon, Kevin MacMahon, Loretta Gallagher, Marie Cosgrave, Leila Cosgrave, Vincent Cosgrave, Chrissie Conway, Mary MacHale, Mary Malone, Hugh Malone, Nellie Malone, Nora Cafferky, Kitty Murphy, Kitty Friel, Paddy Phillips, Martina Sheridan, Eileen Cafferty, Maura Cafferty, Claire de Burgo, Brigid Healy, Gertie Reilly, Evelyn Reilly, Jimmie Walsh, Ben McLoughlin, Andy Davis, Lily Chambers, Bridie Redmond, Lottie Armstrong, Martin Tolan, Mick Pelly, Moya Ruddy, Rita Ruddy, May Goulden, Sarah Lavelle, Sarah Corcoran, Harry MacCarthy,** and last, but not least, my own brother, **Willie Carlos."** The situation grows serious, especially when you have evidence of support for the other side from such a place as Howth. This is shown in a passage from a letter written by **Lizzie Malone:** "I learn Drogheda is already forming an army, and has even placed a general over it in the person of Ada O'Neill. A good choice, too, because wherever an O'Neill commands there is sure to be a decisive victory." There is also evidence that the Drogheda legions are in training. This is from a communique received from **Ada O'Neill:** "Some of our bashful members were so overwhelmed by your praise that they did not care to run the risk of meriting it again, as I find I am the only one competing here this month. Or perhaps this second winter entices them out of doors, with its alluring prospects of sliding and **snowballing.**" The air of mystery enveloping the movements of Carrick-on-Shannon does not tend towards reassuring us as to the outcome of all this warlike behaviour. However, we must only "wait and see.' My only other correspondent from Drogheda besides Ada is **Rita**

McAllister, who has written me a most interesting letter. To these two loyal friends I am deeply grateful, though I by no means feel like censuring the snowballers. One of the Ballina boy recruits—**Aindrias Daibhis**—writes a very pleasing letter and tells me a good deal about his school work. I hope to hear from him every month in future. Several others of the Western army have sent very welcome messages as well. **Mairin Nic Fhionnlaoich**, of Dun Padraig, who joined the Guild long ago when she was young (she is now 14), has written to renew her acquaintance with us. Mile failte roimpi! In the course of her letter she writes: "I learn Irish at school and am very fond of it, as it is our own language, and I think every Irish boy and girl should learn to speak it." Dia go deo leat, a Mhairin! Nac scriobhfaidh tu i nGaedhilg chughan an chead uair eile? Our little friend in Liverpool—**Kathy Corkill**—is very grateful to those members of the Guild who wrote to her—especially Lilian Nally and Mary Rennie. She will be glad to hear from other members. Her address is Ward XI., Parkhill Sanatorium, Dingle, Liverpool, England. I was delighted to come upon a message in my post-bag this month from my old friend, **Proinsias Mac Thighearnain**, who is delighted with the progress we are making. He also is studying Irish very hard, and hopes to spend his summer holidays this year in one of the Irish colleges. He could not take a surer step towards the beautiful fairyland of Irish speech. Go n-eirghe leis go geal! I was overjoyed to get a letter from **Mary Rennie** and to learn that she had at last shaken off her illness and was able to be up and doing again. And I need hardly say that I am grateful for the prayers she sent up to God for me at the glorious Easter time. From one of her young friends also—**Dorothy Nelson**—a letter has come in which she asks for admittance to the Guild. She is as welcome as all her school friends have been, and I am sure she will often come and sit in our midst. Another new member is **Eilis Ni Riain**, of Dundrum, Dublin, who has been a long time trying to pluck up sufficient courage to join us. She needn't have been the least little bit afraid, for every boy and girl of the right disposition may be sure of a welcome in Blessed Gabriel's Guild. Our friend **Philie Cauldwell**, who has been a long time silent, makes atonement by bringing into the Guild her nephew, **Thomas Redgrave**, whose coming is as welcome as his venerable auntie's return. **Mary Ward**, of Killaloe, writes an enthusiastic letter in praise of the prize volume awarded to her—Canon Sheehan's "Glenanaar." She says she has never read so beautiful a story. My little friend in far-away Grenoble, near the scenes of strife and carnage in France—**Josie O'Brien**—did not forget me at Easter, and I am very grateful for her dear letter and beautiful Easter card. She prays every day that the dreadful war may soon be at an end, so that she may see again her dear Mount Argus and the Ireland of her love. **Kathleen Flanagan** was late for last month's competition. In a breezy letter **Nina Carlos** threatens to place her sister completely in the shade when **she** starts recruiting for the Guild. Easter cards and messages were sent by **Lilian Nally, John Reid, Kathleen Savage, Katie Doyle, Rita Carlos, Chrissie Burke**, and **May Allen.** My warmest thanks to them, one and all!

Badge Winners.

When the Editor receives a fresh supply of Blessed Gabriel Badges the following will be entitled to one each—**Rita Carlos**, 7 Convent Terrace, Ballina, Co. Mayo, and **Nancy Dolan**, Presentation Convent, Drogheda. (Nancy's name was inadvertently omitted from last month's list.)

Important.

(1) All newcomers will please write a personal note to **Francis**, apart from their competition papers, asking to be admitted to membership of the Guild. (2) Always put your name and address on your competition paper, whether you send a letter or not.

The Awards.

The prize for the best essay on "The Coming of the Maytime" has been won by **Eilis Ni Riain**, 3 Glenville Terrace, Dundrum, Co. Dublin. Very fine essays were also sent by Ada O'Neill, Rita Carlos, Maureen McKinley, Lizzette Whitehead, Philie Cauldwell, Katie Doyle, Denis Moran, Peter Whelan and Annie Dunne.

Members Under 12.

The prize for the best little letter on "My Favourite Song-bird" has not been awarded, as the letters received were not up to the required standard.

OUR NEXT COMPETITION.

I.—For Members over 12 and under 18 years of age.

A handsome book prize will be awarded for the best set of three quotations, in prose or verse, on "June."

II.—For Members under 12 years of age.

A handsome book prize will be offered for the best little essay on "Devotion to the Sacred Heart."

All competitors will please remember the following rules:—All competition papers must be certified by some responsible person as being the **unaided** and **original work** of the competitors. They must have attached to them the coupon which will be found in this issue (one coupon will be sufficient for all the members of a family), and must be written on one side only of the paper. They must be sent so as to reach the office not later than by the **first post** on May 14th. All letters to be addressed: **Francis**, c/o "The Cross," St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin.

PRIZE ESSAY.

The Coming of the Maytime.

The cold dreary days of winter have flown away on the silver wings of Time, and Mother Nature now dons her fairest robe, her sweetest smile, to greet the coming of beauteous May. The world is veiled in loveliness. In shady glens, on emerald banks and at the mossy roots of towering trees shy violets bloom, golden primroses gaily blow by rippling crystal streams; in green verdant meadows the flaunting poppy gleams, attracting by its gaudy beauty, yet at the same time reminding one of the shallowness of the passing things of earth, while in obscure haunts and dewy vales white-robed daisies and tiny blue-bells shyly bloom unseen, shunning the rude gaze of careless men.

At such a time one wistfully longs to avoid the glare of the vile world of pomp and pleasure and to seek the peaceful solitude of sylvan vales, to roam through verdant meadows and fragrant dales, to watch the progress of the unassuming blossoms that deck the bare bleak earth with tender beauty, and to note with genuine love the tiny, fragile buds unfolding till the flower blooms forth in its full perfection.

May is the loveliest month in all the year. Our hearts ought indeed to be flooded with gratitude to the tender Master who has prepared all this beauty for our benefit as we gaze with enraptured eyes at the purple mists rising from the dusky towering mountains at silvery dawn, when the sleeping world lies veiled in shadowy beauty; at the flaming sky at sunset, tinted gloriously, at the wild throbbing waves of the majestic, ever-restless ocean, and the rippling streams that flow so untroubled and calm. The sky above gleams azure, flecked with pearly clouds; the air is sweet with the glorious fragrance of the snowy hawthorn and swaying, rose-tinted woodbine. The birds have returned from winter's exile to gladden the hearts of men with their sweet songs; everywhere pure, unsullied beauty reigns supreme and in the hearts of men ought loveliness also dwell.

As we feast our eyes on the sweetness of the world, thus veiled in glory when Maytime dawns, our thoughts naturally turn to her to whom this exquisite month is dedicated—Mary, the supreme Queen and Mother of all. No earthly artist, however famous, however great, has ever done justice to the peerless loveliness, the exquisite, sublime beauty of that glorious face, worn by care and sorrow, saddened by toil and pain, yet ever radiant with a light that was not of earth, shadowed with the anguished sweetness of one who had the wondrous, unfailing strength to bravely and unflinchingly inhale the bitter fragrance of the snowy, unsullied lily of renunciation, and to walk in the dusky shade of eternal night. Thinking of her sad life our eyes are wet, for though the greatest heroine that ever graced this weary world of sorrow and woe, she met with nought save insult and humiliation. No clash of trumpets, no shouts of triumph proclaimed her coming. She lived in the world forgotten and ignored,

> "A flower that was born to blush unseen
> And shed its sweetness on the desert air."

There is no life-story so sublimely great, so enthralling as hers, the mother of God.

> "Daughter of kings, companion of the peasant,
> Hers were the shaded paths, the sunless ways."

Ever brave, ever patient, she nobly trod the thorn-strewn way from the Crib to the Cross. None knew what she suffered, what she endured in silent agony. It is the tragic sadness of our Blessed Lady's life that touches many most. They realise that having drunk so deep of the bitter chalice of pain and sorrow she is able to really comfort the bruised and bleeding hearts of those who with fervent trust seek the tender shelter, the sure, unfailing refuge of her loving arms.

Fair May is coming now, so, remembering the tenderness and sweetness of this heavenly Queen, let us cull our fairest and purest flowers to lay them at her feet; snowy lilies, shy, sweet violets (symbolical of the purity and humility of that hidden life), serene snowdrops and swaying blue-bells, glowing early roses, roses that breathe of love, tender and deep. Many of us may be able to strew Mary's shrine with gay hot-house flowers, while others may be only able to bestow those that they gather from Nature's fairy bowers; but it matters not what the gift costs, it is to the dispositions and love of the giver that this gentle Queen will look. It may entail some sacrifice, but we may rest assured that in the end we will not be losers.

As we kneel at the feet of the Queen of May, praying for all that we need, let us not forget our dear land or those, "the noblest of the noble, the bravest of the brave," who gave their precious lives for their God and country just one short year ago. Again, let many a fervent prayer be wafted as incense before Mary's golden throne for those who pine in exile bitterer than death, in the cold, unfriendly land of a stranger, far, far away from the emerald vales, mossy banks and verdant hills of green Innisfail, that they may soon return to the dear old land that bore them, for whose sweet, revered sake they have even wooed grim Death, and that they may be "as free as the Lord God meant them."

If we love our Blessed Lady we will never know the darkness of despair, the gloom of unsoothed sorrow; if we seek her always in winter and summer, joy and pain, the fragrance of that "peace which passeth all understanding" shall lighten our weary hearts and hollow the rugged road that leads to the land where there is no night.

The years pass speedily away on the fleeting wings of old Father Time; the gates of Death soon ope for all, let us earnestly hope then to meet the loving Queen of the May when the restless sea of life is stilled for ever and the dreary shadows have flown when our souls wing their way to "God's own keeping."

EILIS NI RIAIN.

In Thanksgiving, Etc.

Per Very Rev. Fr. Ephrem, C.P., three shillings has been received towards the expenses of the Canonization of Blessed Gabriel.

The Sisters of Mercy (Roscommon) have forwarded ten shillings, received towards same Cause.

G. R. sends, per Fr. Joseph, two shillings and sixpence towards Cause of Blessed Gabriel and the same amount towards Cause of Gemma Galgani.

Mrs. E. J. Keown (Lismalore, Co. Fermanagh) sends five shillings towards the expenses of the Canonization of Blessed Gabriel.

Anon. (London) sends seven shillings towards same Cause.

W. Gorman (Roundstone) sends one shilling towards the Cause of Gemma Galgani.

The above donations, for which we are sincerely grateful, will be duly forwarded to the Postulator at Rome.

Contributions towards the expenses of the Causes of Blessed Gabriel and Gemma Galgani and favours received through their intercession will be gladly acknowledged in these pages.

TO OUR PROMOTERS.—In answer to inquiries made from time to time, we think it well to let supporters of this magazine know that all our supporters and promoters participate in the benefit of four hundred and thirty-four Masses, specially offered every year for benefactors by the Fathers of this Province, as well as in the prayers, penances and good works performed daily by all the members of the Congregation of the Passion.